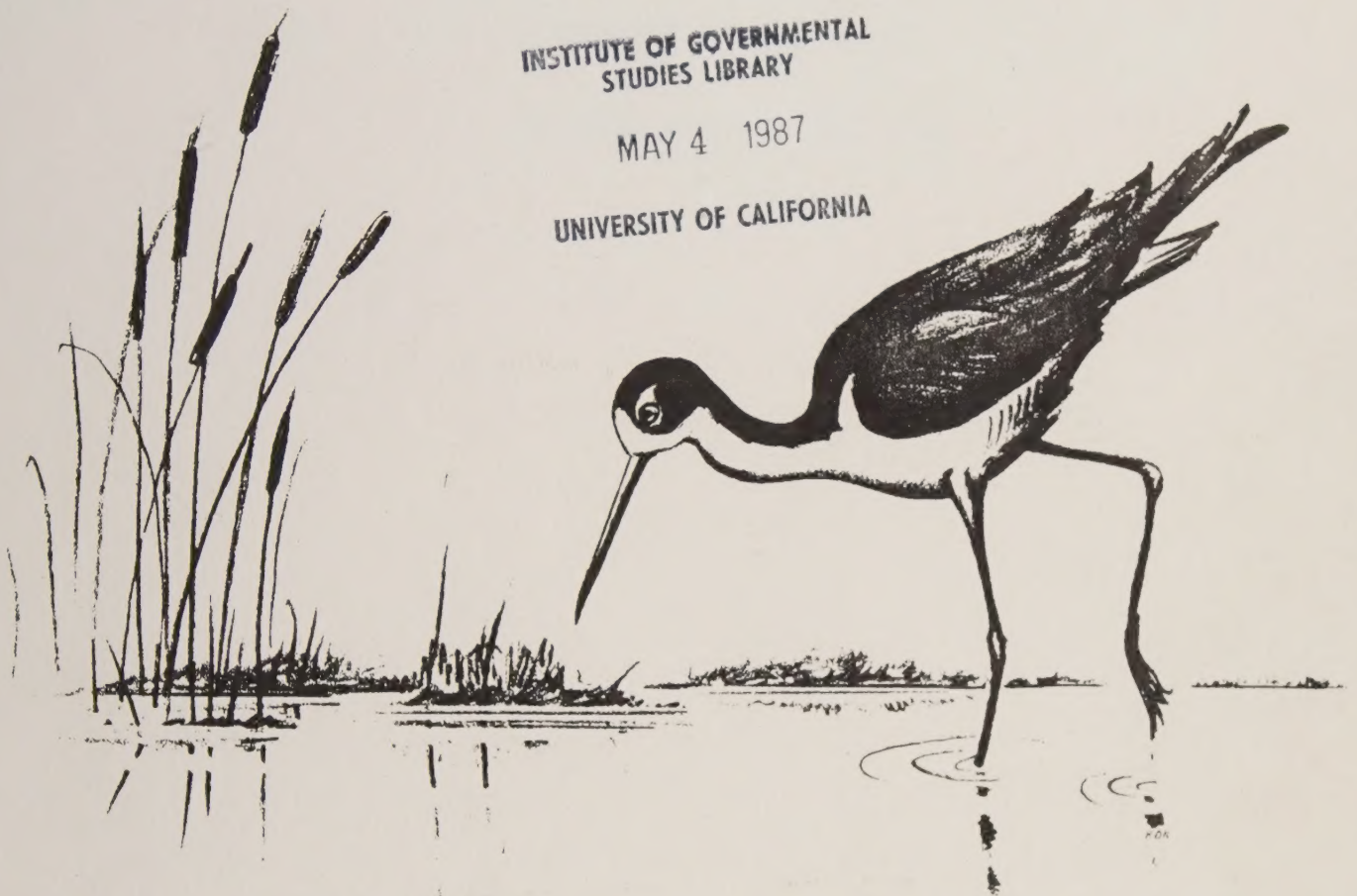


CONSERVATION

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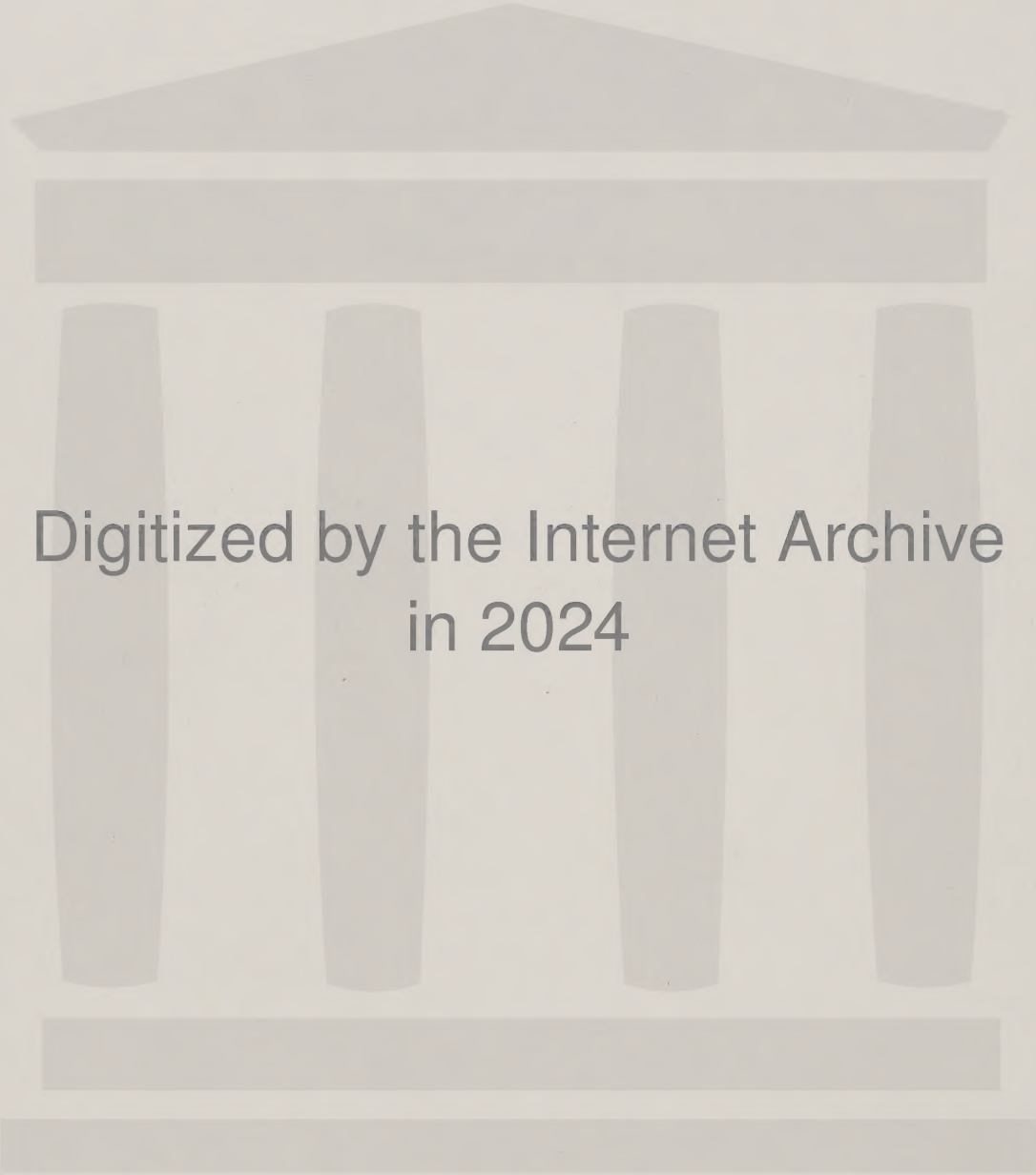
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AN ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN

City of Chula Vista, Calif.



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CONSERVATION ELEMENT OF

THE CHULA VISTA GENERAL PLAN

Prepared by the
City Planning Department
City of Chula Vista
October, 1973

CONSERVATION ELEMENT
OF THE
CHULA VISTA GENERAL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Section 65302 (d) of the Government Code of the State of California requires that:

"On or before December 31, 1973, every city and county shall prepare, adopt and submit to the Secretary of the Resources Agency, a local conservation plan for the comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of natural resources within its jurisdiction."

Previous elements of the General Plan concern themselves mainly with adapting land uses to accommodate population increases. The Conservation Element represents a step in the continuum of land management that redefines private values wherein they must function within a framework that will protect the public interest by maintaining and improving environmental quality and resource productivity.

This report represents the Conservation Element of the Chula Vista General Plan. The report is divided into two sections: Section I is intended to provide the Planning Commission and City Council with the background for the conservation policy presented in Section II.

The purpose of this Conservation Element is to identify resources that should be considered for conservation. Designation of an area on the Conservation Element map does not imply that public acquisition will occur or that development of the area should not be allowed. Rather, such designations identify natural resource areas so that, at such time as a use may be proposed in the area, the Planning Commission and City Council can evaluate the proposal in light of the objectives and policies of the Conservation Element.

SECTION I

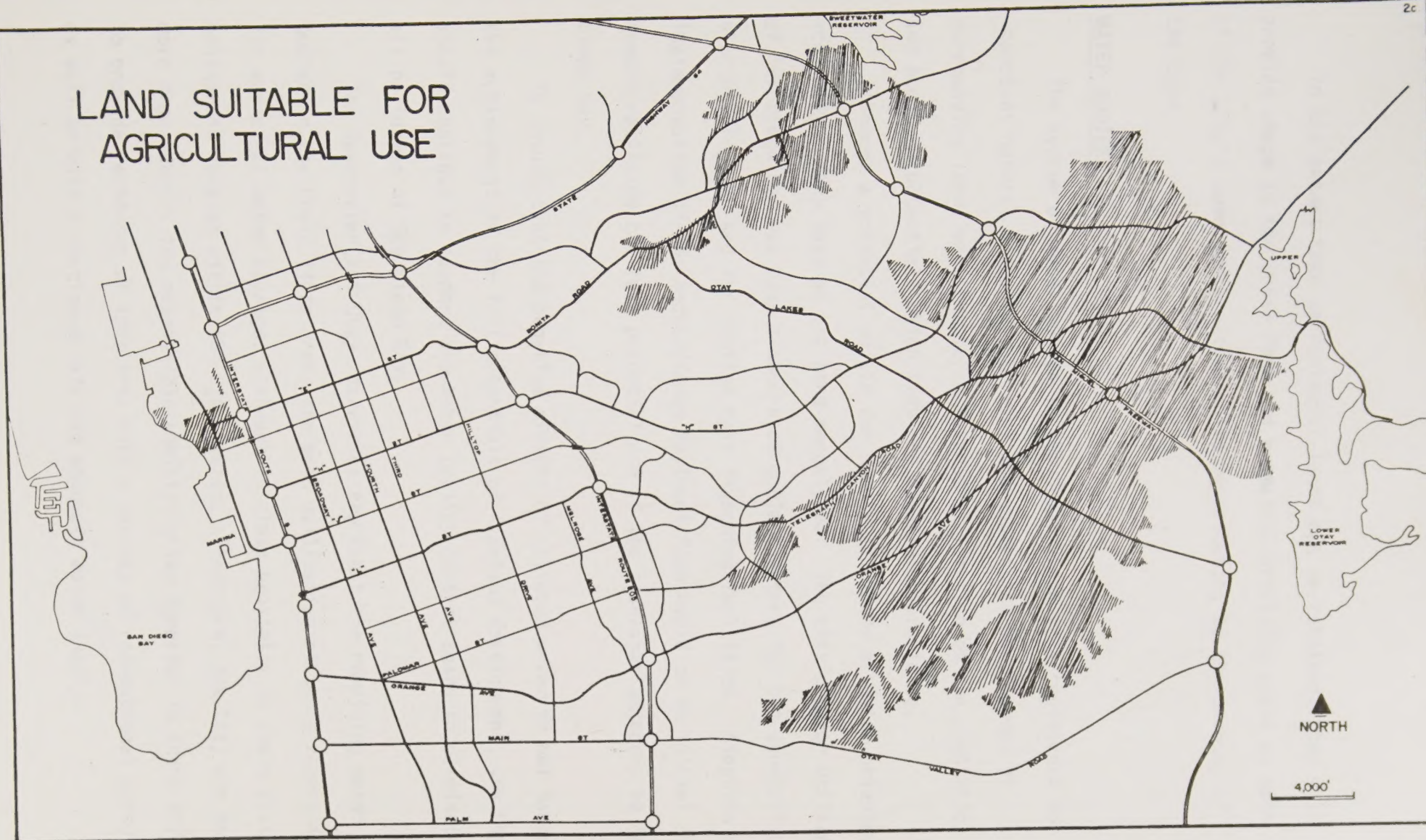
AGRICULTURE

The basic issue concerning lands now devoted to agriculture involves the degree to which the City wishes to attempt to conserve these lands, or portions of them, for continued agricultural use. It is well established that agriculture cannot compete with urban uses. At best, farming activities in the vicinity of urban areas must be viewed as interim uses. Tax breaks possible under the Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) tend to prolong the period that agricultural pursuits can exist in an urban area but this is not a permanent solution.

Agriculture has played a significant role in Chula Vista's history and even today it is still a major segment of Chula Vista's economy. Although operations have become more efficient from a functional and economic standpoint, agriculture is experiencing difficulty in maintaining its operations. Rising land values, increasing taxes and land use conflicts have all but eliminated agriculture from the immediate coastal areas in Chula Vista. The remaining agricultural activity, south of Telegraph Canyon Road and east to the Otay Reservoirs, will eventually be eliminated unless a conscious effort is made to preserve lands for agricultural use.

The San Diego County Agriculture Department has stated that the soil in the area represents some of the most productive in the county. Local soils are particularly suitable for growing tomatoes and other high value cash crops. Tomatoes ranked as the most important crop in Chula Vista in 1971. Realizable income from tomatoes amounted to approximately \$5.5 million. The South Bay has reached prominence in tomato production within the last several years. Normal market forces will cause this to change in future years unless positive steps are taken to offset them.

LAND SUITABLE FOR AGRICULTURAL USE



To the extent that agricultural lands can be retained, they will provide shape to the urban form and permanent breathing space as part of the city's open space system while contributing to the economy of the area.

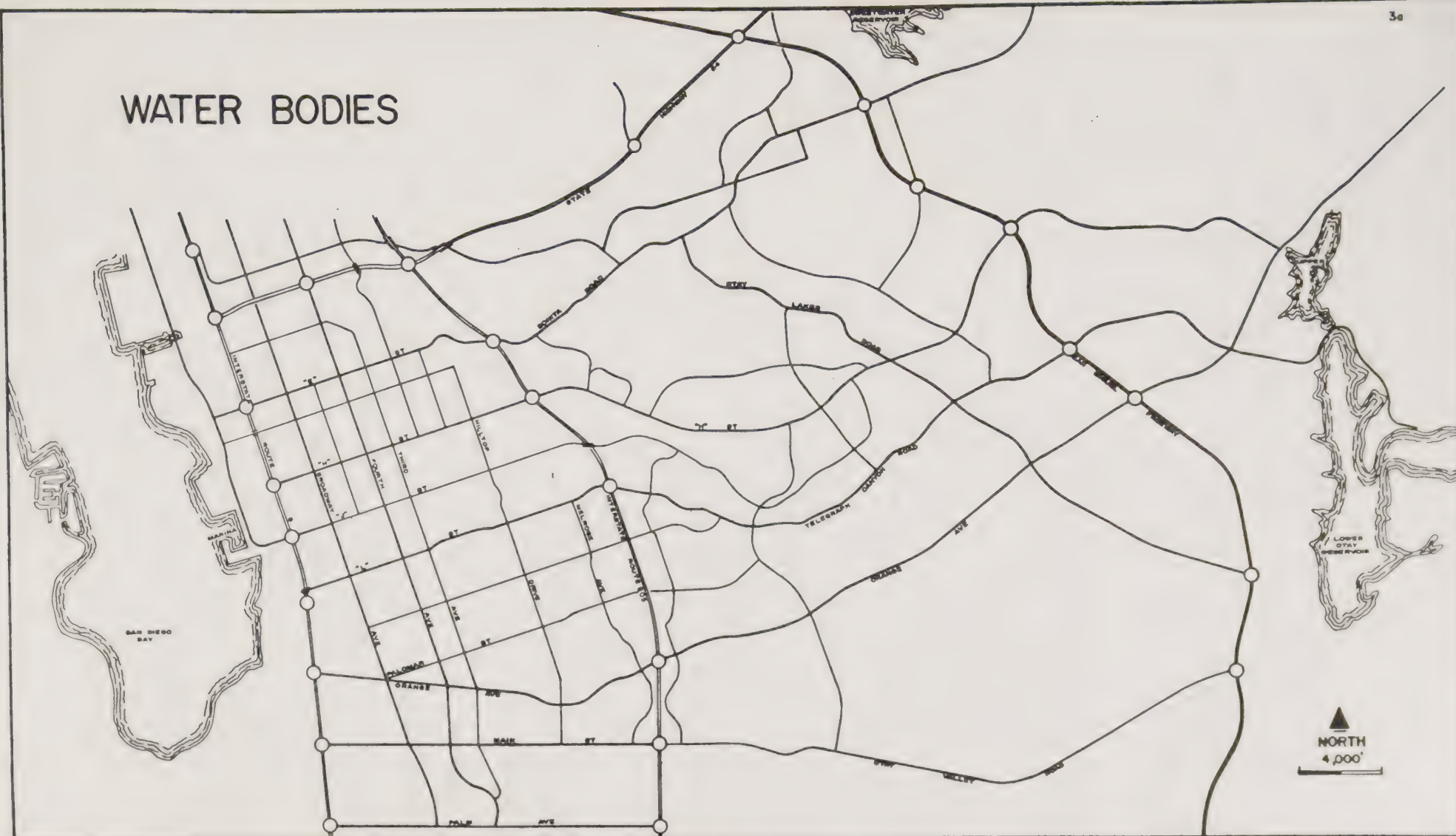
WATER BODIES

The system of water bodies in the Chula Vista area represents an important natural resource. Careful and controlled development of surrounding lands will result in maximum realization of the aesthetic and economic potentials which they are capable of providing.

Although a potential exists for nearly all forms of water oriented activities, many have as yet gone unrealized. The city's major utilization of San Diego Bay has been a source of coolant waters for the generation of electrical power and for limited boat launching facilities. Adoption and implementation of the Sedway/Cooke Bayfront Plan would be an initial step toward realizing the full potential use of the tidelands adjacent to San Diego Bay.

To insure that the negative effects of polluted water do not hamper the achievement of the full potentials of tideland development, the City should continue to support the Water Quality Control Board to eliminate all pollution of San Diego Bay.

The Sweetwater and Otay reservoirs represent the remaining water bodies in the Chula Vista area; the main utilization of these reservoirs is for municipal water storage; although in close proximity to Chula Vista, neither is located within the City limits. Therefore, the City can do no more than support the responsible administrative agencies in their efforts to provide residents of this area with a variety of recreational pursuits as well as with a continued safe and adequate water supply.




NORTH
4,000'

SAND AND GRAVEL





Extensive sand and gravel deposits represent Chula Vista's most important mineral resource, both in terms of quantity and economic value. Although deposits are of sufficient size to be economically recoverable, current development practices could result in their being rendered inaccessible or unusable.

Chula Vista has two types of sand and gravel deposits: river and marine terrace. The former, located in the Otay and Sweetwater River bottoms, are water transported alluvium materials washed down from upstream foothills and canyons. These are the most usable of the two, owing to their being well sorted, having a high degree of uniformity, and being generally free of residual debris. The latter represent remnants of ancient beach sand located in the uplands east of the urbanized area. Normally of denser concentrations, marine terrace deposits have the drawback of an extensive overburden, which has generally rendered extraction prohibitively expensive.

The current demand for sand and gravel originates primarily from populated areas where the need for residential, commercial and industrial structures is most active. To minimize transportation costs, mining operations normally exist within close proximity to their market. Inevitably, operational conflicts occur between the mining operations and adjacent land uses with the very population pressures which initially spurred production eventually being responsible for their closing.

In considering what now appear to be adequate sand and gravel resources, one should bear in mind that future urbanization and growth of the area may in time cause shrinkage in the available quantities of these resources.

SAND AND GRAVEL

-  SAND
-  DECOMPOSED GRANITE
-  GRAVEL
-  VARIABLE—Soil may contain sand or gravel.

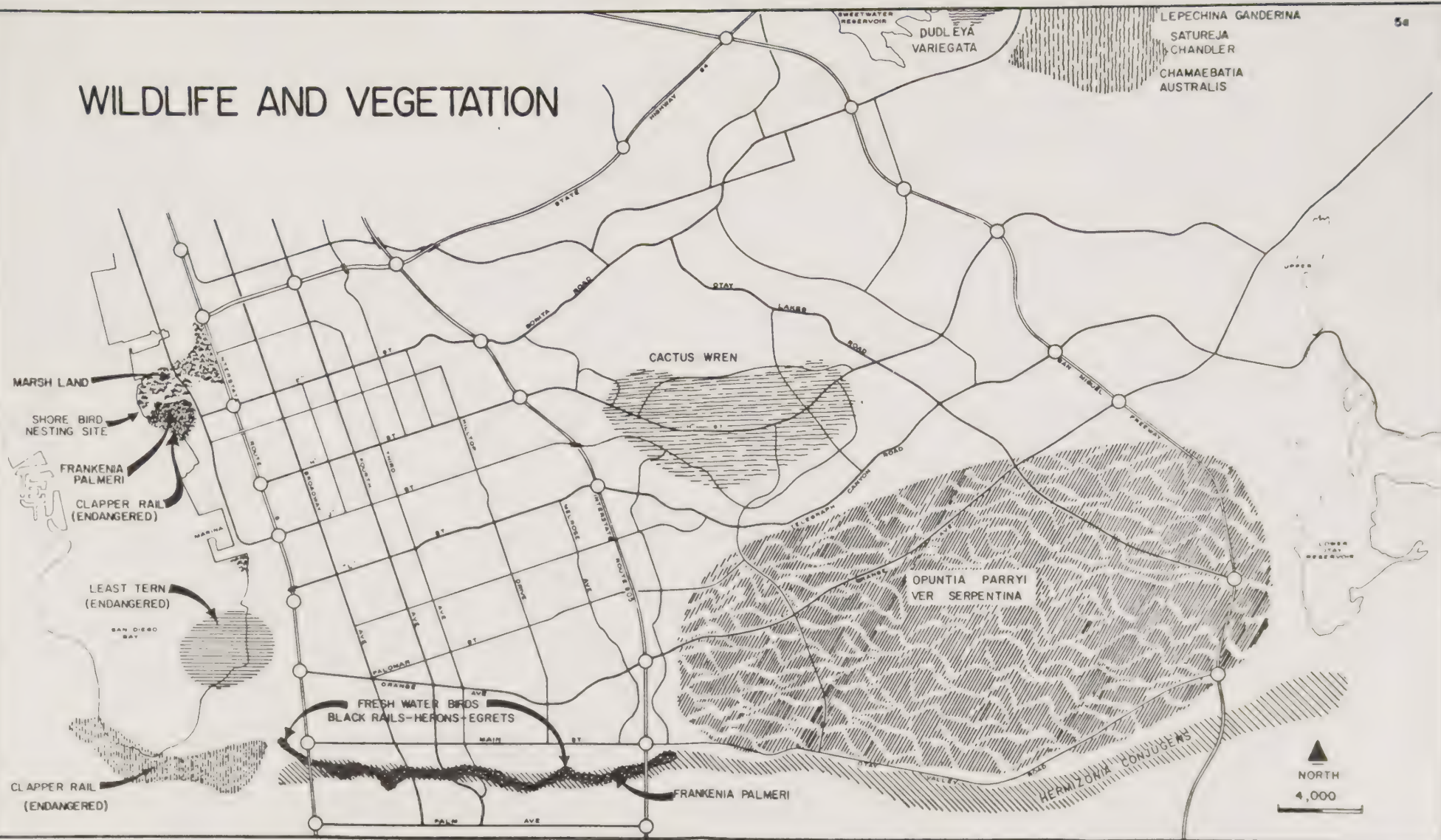


WILDLIFE - VEGETATION

The planning area contains plant and animal life which deserve consideration for preservation due to their uniqueness and/or rarity. Urban development has eliminated many of the natural habitats within the Chula Vista area. To insure that irreplaceable habitats are not completely eliminated, steps will have to be taken to preserve areas of significant ecological importance.

Of those habitats inventoried, only the East Bay Marsh, located at the mouth of the Sweetwater River, was deemed to be of sufficient natural habitat value to justify preservation. The marsh functions as an important resting site for migratory water fowl as well as a nesting and feeding area for wildlife that inhabits the marsh the year around. It has been identified as a nesting site for the endangered Clapper Rail as well as an environment for the unique shrub *Frankenia Palmeri*. The marsh also serves as a filter, capturing silt, soil and other materials, thereby increasing the clarity and purity of bay water. In addition, the marsh serves as a nursery for the young growth of shellfish and other fish species, and as a source of nutrients exported to adjoining waters and used by fish in later growth stages.

WILDLIFE AND VEGETATION



SECTION II

CONSERVATION POLICY

CONSERVATION POLICY

A. INTRODUCTION

As urbanization occurred over the years, little attention has been paid to the environmental consequences of growth. In recent years, however, an environmental consciousness has developed. While many of the environmental resources mentioned in the State Law are not present in the Chula Vista area, those resources which are present will be conserved by the adoption and implementation of the following objectives and policies.

B. OBJECTIVES

1. To provide for the judicious management of Chula Vista's natural resources.
2. To promote land use policies and practices which will minimize the impact of development upon natural resources.
3. To preserve highly productive agricultural lands for the production of food and fiber.
4. To conserve and maintain the quality of existing water resources by careful management of lands adjacent to water resource areas.
5. To protect and manage sand and gravel resources for the benefit of the general public.
6. To preserve habitat for unique and endangered species of wildlife and areas of rare or unique vegetation.

C. POLICIES:

1. Agriculture:

- a. The County of San Diego and local property owners are encouraged to utilize the Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) as an aid in retaining agricultural lands in productivity.
- b. The legislature and local legislative representatives are urged to support the enactment of new State legislation to provide greater incentive to retain in agricultural use those agricultural lands which are threatened by urban development.
- c. Buffer zones shall be provided to reduce the conflicts between agricultural and urban uses.

2. Water Resources

- a. The Chula Vista Bayfront Plan and Program shall be utilized to guide development of the Bayfront so as to maintain a harmonious relationship with the natural environment in that area.
- b. The Regional Water Quality Control Board shall be supported in their program to maintain the quality of water in San Diego County.
- c. Access to the waters of San Diego Bay shall be enhanced in order to maximize their use for recreation.
- d. Land uses around reservoirs should be limited to those which do not diminish the value of the water for domestic use or recreation.
- e. If salt production should be phased out in the south end of San Diego Bay, retention of the pond/dike network should be encouraged for potential utilization of the area for aquiculture.

3. Sand and Gravel

- a. Suitably located sand and gravel deposits should be preserved and land use practices which will insure that these resources remain accessible for utilization now and in the future should be fostered.
- b. Rehabilitation of worked out sand and gravel areas into other productive uses shall be encouraged.

4. Wildlife - Vegetation

- a. Land use and development practices that recognize the value of plans and wildlife to man, and which preserve unique and endangered species, should be followed.
- b. Any marshlands determined to be of high ecological value should be preserved in their natural state and all new development, whether roadways, buildings, or other structures, should be carefully located and designed to promote this end. Where it can be determined that some filling and dredging is required to accommodate a viable plan, it will be considered.
- c. Areas of San Diego Bay housing unique forms of life, some of which is currently considered rare or endangered as a species should be preserved, protected and restored. Such areas include: open bay waters, small areas of salt marshes, and the pond/dike network of the salt evaporation ponds.
- d. The proposals in the San Diego Unified Port District's Master Plan, recommending the development of wildlife habitat in the South Bay to replace that destroyed by other developments will be supported by the City of Chula Vista.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

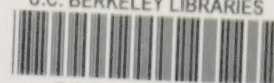
The development of a Natural Resource Overlay Zone for the preservation of natural resources will be studied in order:

- a. To establish land use regulations which will protect mineral resources from intrusion by urban uses.
- b. To provide performance standards which will regulate the extraction of mineral resources and protect adjacent land uses.
- c. To set standards and develop plans for the rehabilitation of properties where mineral deposits have been exhausted.

GENERAL PLAN CONSERVATION ELEMENT Chula Vista, California



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